

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested. Currently, claims 1-16 and 20-30 are pending in this application.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102:

Claims 1-16 and 20-29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by Fujisawa et al (U.S. '062, hereinafter "Fujisawa"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

For a reference to anticipate a claim, each element must be found, either expressly or under principles of inherency, in the reference. Applicant respectfully submits that Fujisawa fails to disclose each element of the claimed invention. For example, Fujisawa fails to disclose storing data representative of messages output by an output device, determining whether an input is an allowable response to a most recent one of the messages and if not, determining whether the input is an allowable response to a preceding message as required by claim 1. Similar comments apply to independent claims 24, 28 and 29.

The Office Action fails to even allege that Fujisawa discloses the above feature (see, e.g., the paragraph bridging pages 2 and 3 of the Office Action). If the next Office Action maintains the above rejection over Fujisawa, Applicant respectfully requests that the next office Action specifically identify what (i.e., what col. and line number(s) and/or what Figure(s) of Fujisawa) discloses the above feature.

Through the above feature, the system of the present invention is capable of storing not only the most recent question asked but also at least one

previous question. The system thus has the capability of interpreting a user's input as containing information relevant to the previous question if it is determined that the user's input is not relevant to the most recent question.

Accordingly, the system of the present invention is useful where the user is responding to a message (e.g., question) from the system. In contrast, the invention disclosed by Fujisawa appears to be primarily useful when the system is responding to questions from the user. For example, Fujisawa teaches "This invention relates to knowledge based information retrieval system and in particular to a human interface of an intellectual query system permitting the end user to query efficiently information stored in a network structure in an electronic file (emphasis added)." (See col. 1, lines 14-18.) Fujisawa further teaches "A first object of this invention is to solve the problematical points as described above and to enable the end user to query desired information from a description by a natural language which even on the basis of fragmental memory (emphasis added)." (See col. 2, lines 14-18.) Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that one skilled in the art would not have been motivated to even modify the system disclosed by Fujisawa to provide a system or methodology whereby the user's input is examined to see whether it is an allowable response not only to the most recent system output but also to see whether it might be an allowable response to an earlier system output if the user's input is not relevant to the most recent system output.

With respect to independent claim 2, the Office Action states, "As per claim 2, due to the similarity of claim 2 to claim 1, and Fujisawa additionally

anticipated a plurality lexical rules for known natural languages conversion such as English, Japanese, etc., and relationships of these rules for conversation (col. 2, lines 56-67, col. 5, lines 9 to col. 13, line 14, for example)." While the Office Action therefore discusses Fujisawa's disclosure of a plurality of lexical rules, Fujisawa fails to disclose "one or more second rules each corresponding to one of said first rules but with one relationship criterion relaxed."

Claims 1, 2, 28 and 29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Berger et al (U.S. '981, hereinafter "Berger") or under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by Carbonell et al (U.S. '785, hereinafter "Carbonell"). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

Like Fujisawa, both Berger and Carbonell fails to disclose storing data representative of messages output by an output device, determining whether an input is an allowable response to a most recent one of the messages and if not, determining whether the input is an allowable response to a preceding message as required by independent claims 1, 28 and 29. Indeed, the Office Action fails to even allege that Berger or Carbonell discloses the above feature. For example, Berger discloses non-dialogue (i.e., non-user interactive) input of text to translated in the output of translated text, and Berger fails to disclose the possibility of responding to a "preceding one of said messages". If the rejection over Berger or Carbonell is maintained, Applicant respectfully requests that the next Office Action specifically point out what discloses this particular feature. With respect to independent claim 2, Applicant submits that

Berger and Carbonell each fails to disclose "second rules each corresponding to one of said first rules but with one relationship criterion relaxed." Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 1, 2, 28 and 29 under 35 U.S.C. §102 over Berger or Carbonell be withdrawn.

New Claim:

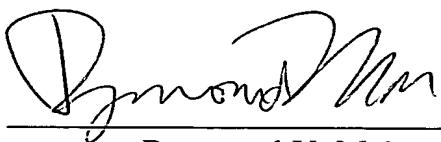
New claim 30 has been added to provide additional protection for the invention. Since new claim 30 depends from independent claim 1, Applicant submits that this claim is allowable for the reasons discussed above and for the limitations further recited therein.

Conclusion:

Applicant believes that this entire application is in condition for allowance and respectfully requests a notice to this effect. If the Examiner has any questions or believes that an interview would further prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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